



**US Army Corps
Of Engineers**

Walla Walla District
Public Affairs Office

News Release

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Corps work on Lower Granite Lock gate nears completion

Walla Walla, Wash., -- Shippers and waterway users have been notified that work on the navigation lock downstream gate at Lower Granite Dam, near Pomeroy, Wash., is nearing completion and that traffic on the Snake River could resume in as little as a week, according to operations division officials from the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"At this time, contingent on successful testing, Lower Granite lock is scheduled to open 10 April 2002, at 6:00 a.m.," was how the official notification to the ports and shippers read in part. It added: "You will be notified at the earliest possible date of any changes to this schedule."

When the lock reopens to commercial traffic, recreational users will again be able to pass up and downstream in their boats.

Workers from the Corps and its prime contractor, Advanced American Diving, still have a number of things to complete such as fine tuning alignments, and seal adjustments, and those efforts are in progress. Critical alignment testing will occur at the end of this week, which will help to determine the actual date the lock will be available for service.

The Corps and its contractor have been working since the end of January on this miter gate rehabilitation and repair effort. If workers at the project experience any unforeseeable delays at this point, the original contract scheduled completion date remains in effect. Under terms of the contract, reopening of the lock was scheduled for April 29. Any earlier completion and opening of the lock to traffic, such as the possible opening April 10, could bring the contractor incentive bonuses that could be as high as \$20,000 per day, up to a maximum of \$200,000.

Corps officials stress that while the work is nearing an end, as with all construction jobs, any number of factors could affect the actual reopening of the river to traffic.

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Editors Note: The Walla Walla District Public Affairs Office will follow up this news release when actual completion is estimated to be about 36-48 hours away. Outlets wishing to visit the dam to see the first vessel locking through MUST contact PAO due to security and access issues.

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